

this the general hospital has not but it is by no means necessary in order to conduct such classes. Any common sitting-room or supply room having a large table and a little space for storing material will answer.

This paper was written to be illustrated by an exhibit of the class work. In order that it may be well understood its readers are invited to visit our work-room where they may gain something which may be passed along with profit.

THE COURSE IN HOSPITAL ECONOMICS AT TEACHERS' COLLEGE, N. Y., AND ITS NEED OF ENDOWMENT*

By IDA M. MARKER

- Graduate Hospital Economics Course; Superintendent of Nurses, Hospital of the Good Shepherd, Syracuse, New York.

IN the little blue book of "Nursing Ethics," in the introductory chapter we may read:

If it were possible to bring together all the trained nurses of the present time to be reviewed, and have judgment passed upon them we should have before us a body of volunteers, each of whom occupies her position in the ranks, of her own free will and accord. At first, no doubt, we should be impressed with the magnitude of their numbers. But, when we came to concentrate our attention upon each regiment, as it were, and upon each individual in that regiment, we should be struck with some not altogether pleasant incongruities.

If we glance at the officers, we may find they too are not always in harmony; it is very apparent that each woman is a law unto herself. Her gaze seems to be largely centred upon her own particular regiment without a proper regard as to the manner in which its maneuvers or actions may affect those in front, behind, or on either side.

It was the master mind of the author of the volume from which this quotation was selected, that first promulgated the idea of a special course for the preparation of trained nurses for teachers of nurses, and superintendents of training schools and hospitals. Through the efforts of the American Society of Superintendents of Training Schools for Nurses, the special course in Hospital Economics was introduced into Teachers' College, Columbia University, for the purpose of bringing about a uniformity of training, and curricula, in the nurses' training schools throughout the land.

* Read at the annual meeting of the New York State Nurses' Association, Syracuse, N. Y., October, 1907.

The recognition of the needs of the nursing profession by such an institution as Teachers' College, and the reception of our students within its walls, is a most pleasing instance of the trend of the times towards the realization of high ideals, and acknowledgment of the dignity of our calling.

In 1899 the one year course opened with two students, one of whom, as many of you know, remained as lecturer in charge until last fall, when she resigned her position for other fields of usefulness. Under what difficulties these pioneers obtained and maintained recognition in the College, remains for them to tell, but this we do know, that out of the small beginnings of that meager first year, has grown a well rounded course in Hospital Economics in which trained nurses are taught how to impart knowledge after the most approved methods. From a selection of what material the College afforded, supplemented by the more valuable, though hurried, lectures given by the leading members of the nursing profession of the United States, the work has developed till now there is much that is practical as well as theoretical, and each year brings improvement along these lines.

As examples of the development of the course, the following are cited:—Last year while the first year's work in dietetics was especially arranged for the student nurses, the instructor was not herself a trained nurse, and no application of the relation of food to disease was made—this year the instruction is given by a trained nurse, who is an excellent dietitian and a trained teacher. Again, last year the architect who so ably supplemented the lectures and practical work in hospital equipment and construction, is this year a recognized lecturer in hospital economics, with a course of lectures on hospital planning. There are also a series of lectures on hospital laundries, which did not appear in last year's curriculum. After instruction in elementary psychology and the principles of teaching, together with a course of lectures on biology, the students, under the observation of a critic teacher, have the opportunity of actually conducting classes in anatomy and physiology in one of the training schools of the city.

Another valuable part of the work, is the weekly expedition to some one of the hospitals of the city, for the purpose of observation, and the comparison and discussion with the lecturer in charge which follows.

If past years have brought forth so much that is desirable in such a course, what may we not expect of future years? It is quite probable that the greater part of the theoretical work may be supplemented by actual practical experience in the large institutions of the city.

Teachers' College is situated on Morningside Heights between Riverside Drive and Morningside Park. It is well equipped with laboratories, a library, educational museums, class and lecture rooms, social rooms, etc. Adjoining it on the west is the Thompson Memorial Physical Education Building, with its large gymnasium, exercise rooms, hand ball court, bowling alleys, bath rooms and a small though beautiful swimming pool. The libraries and museums of other buildings of the University are also accessible to students of the college.

Whittier Hall, the hall of residence for women is under the direction of Teachers' College. It is situated within the same block. It is a handsome, ten story building with spacious halls, reception rooms, dining rooms and restaurants. While the sleeping rooms are small, they are comfortable and adequately furnished. The home life is well looked after by a competent and charming house mother, who is also directress of the college.

There is no opportunity for homesickness or loneliness—how could there be in the midst of three hundred and fifty women, the majority of whom are actively engaged in the pursuit of knowledge, and the enjoyment of life.

If one wishes to live perhaps a trifle more economically—there are many comfortable suites in adjacent apartment houses, where light house keeping may be engaged in, but the difference in the cost of living is so little, and the many advantages of Whittier Hall are so great, that the majority of Hospital Economics students prefer the latter place of residence.

To non-residents of New York, a year in the city is in itself an education. To quote from the College Announcement,—“The facilities of the University are supplemented by the many libraries, museums, studios, art rooms and parks of the city,—such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the National Academy of Design, the Art Students' League, the various libraries, American Museum of Natural History, the Botanical Garden, the Zoölogical Park, and the Aquarium. It is unnecessary to speak of the character of New York as a center of intellectual, artistic, historic, economic and social interest, and of the opportunities it offers for the acquirement of general culture.”

The expense of the first year of the course, excluding clothing and traveling expenses, but including residence at Whittier Hall, stationery, laundry, etc., averages about six hundred dollars, though a very careful person might reduce this to five hundred and fifty dollars. This does seem like a considerable sum to expend for nine months' instruction, but personal experience leads me to state that one does get value received.

The advantages are twofold,—to the individual, and to the nursing profession in general. The religious, social, educational and professional advantages all tend to broaden the individual, and make of her a more proficient and competent woman, while the knowledge which comes from the teachings of many of our leading women, and the inspiration of their example, put one on a firmer basis, and inspire to the attainment of high ideals for our profession.

If the graduates of this course but follow the teachings of these women, if more nurses who contemplate institutional work, could be made to feel the necessity of the groundwork given by such a course, what a benefit would accrue to the nursing world. To be sure it cannot take the place of experience, but experience is a dear teacher, and slow and severe.

How much better it would be to take up institution work fortified by, at least, the general ideas of what a training school should be, and what it should give to its nurses, that they may rank with those trained in the best institutions of the United States. And after all these years of effort on the part of the Superintendents' Society, is it not time that we lift the burden from their shoulders, and establish our own chair at Teachers' College? This could be accomplished if only nurses might be made to realize its necessity. Formerly the course came under the department of domestic science with our own "lecturer in charge," but since she has taken up other work, and since the establishment of a course in domestic economy with one of our leading representative women in the chair, the course of hospital economics has been placed in that department. While Miss Nutting can do much for us, that few others could, yet we are imposing on her a heavy burden, and if she were to relinquish her present position, her place would not necessarily be filled by a member of our profession.

What we need is our own endowment, that we may be assured of permanency in the college and surely the nurses of the State of New York ought to be most active in such a progressive movement for the higher education of our profession.



"The heart must ring thy Christmas bells,
Thy inward altars raise."

WHITTIER.